



A N  
E S S A Y  
O N T H E  
Scripture Account of Baptism, &c.  
I N A  
DISCOURSE ON MARK xvi, 16.



[ Price SIXPENCE. ]

Bible - App - Mark [T. 11. 11.]





A N  
E S S A Y  
O N T H E  
Scripture Account of the EFFICACY of  
BAPTISM;  
FAITH IN CHRIST,  
HIS OBEDIENCE AND DEATH TO  
SAVE MEN:

ATTEMPTED IN A  
D I S C O U R S E  
O N  
M A R K xvi, 16.

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IN PROCESS OF TIME THE BEST INSTITUTIONS ARE APT  
TO DECLINE, AND BY SENSIBLE DEGREES TO SWERVE  
AND DEPART FROM THE PERFECTION OF THEIR FIRST  
STATE; AND THEREFORE IT IS A GOOD RULE, TO  
PRESERVE THINGS FROM CORRUPTION AND DEGENE-  
RACY, OFTEN TO LOOK BACK TO THE FIRST INSTI-  
TUTION, AND BY THAT TO CORRECT THOSE IMPER-  
FECTIONS AND ERRORS WHICH WILL ALMOST UNA-  
VOIDABLY CREEP IN WITH TIME.

TILLOTSON.

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By a SINCERE ADVOCATE for the  
DOCTRINE of CHRIST.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**I**N the present age have appeared many learned and judicious treatises on the Rite of Baptism, as instituted in the New Testament, in which the mode or manner of administering it hath been clearly and fully stated, as practised by the first promulgators of the gospel. And the arguments and proofs, which they have urged on that subject, have been often supported by the concurring concessions of many very sensible Pedobaptists, both of the laity and clergy; the latter of whom, notwithstanding, persist in practising a mere human ceremony instead of it. Likewise, the qualifications in candidates for that institution have been clearly stated, and proved from Scripture.

THESE are topics which have been so often and judiciously handled, that it would be mispending time, and also trespassing upon the patience and candour of the public, to offer any thing upon them unnecessarily, in discoursing upon the text. But, however, the writers we referred to have occasionally dropped



a few observations upon the following subject, yet it has not, that I know of, ever been particularly, stated or discussed, by any one of them. And yet it appears, to the Author, of real moment or importance that it should be clearly understood, as related in the Sacred Writings, as one of the primitive ends for which it is there declared to be instituted.--- With this view, I have been led to state the following observations, and which are a Supplement to what hath been advanced concerning that rite.

IN prosecuting which, I am fully aware, I shall encounter the prejudices, opinions, and practice of the learned, as well as the generality of men, who profess the Christian Religion; many of whom either deny, or call in question, the truth of what is pleaded for, as not being the scripture account of the design of this institution. Others will object, by urging, it is making a favour of it, in expecting to be saved by works, and not by faith in Christ alone. But I appeal to the law, and the testimony, if what I have advanced is not according thereto, it is, because there is no light or truth in it; but if, on the contrary, it is evinced and supported by those writings, surely it will be owned, at least by the candid reader, that it demands a serious and unbiaſſed regard, by every genuine and consistent advocate for primitive and unadulterated Christianity, as contained in the New Testament.

SHOULD any object to what is advanced in the following pages concerning baptism, in the words of the apostles to Christ, Who then can be saved? seeing very few who profess Christianity have submitted to that rite, upon faith in Christ and repentance. Such persons may justly be sent for an answer to what is revealed in the New Testament concerning it, as a satisfactory and full reply. If, notwithstanding what he has revealed, men will urge, it is narrowing the gate and way to be saved, or obtain remission of sins; whereas that of believing, or faith in Christ alone, will answer the same end, and widen it, I reply, in the words of the apostle, addressed to unbelieving Jews, who sought after a sign of their own devising, as the greatest, if not the only proof Jesus could give them of his being the Messiah, and the Greeks, who depended upon the wisdom of the wise alone,---Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? In the gospel, Jesus is preached unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the the weakness of God is stronger than men. What if he hath chosen the foolish things of the world, (*i. e.* what those men called foolishness,) to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. If the persons we refer to, admit the force and conclusiveness of these words, as levelled

velled against Jews and Gentiles, who on those accounts did not believe in and obey Christ, to be saved, who of God is made unto men wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord; they ought also, as it respects the rite of baptism, to save men, because in the New Testament He has appointed it, for obtaining that end, as well as faith in Christ. If, therefore, they deny that efficacy to the former, they must also to the latter, they being both his own appointments, through which he saves men, or grants them remission of sins.

IF what I have advanced is not countenanced and supported in the New Testament, I alone certainly am answerable for narrowing the way by which men are to be saved; and consequently, then it will appear I am doing a real injury to the law of Christ, and entailing upon myself the odium many readers will not fail to fix upon me, for including the indispensable obligation of baptism to be saved in my creed of the doctrine of Christ. And, even supposing what I have advanced is really proved to be the truth, as it is in Jesus, I shall not in this age think it singular to be censured, in pleading for it in the manner contained in the following discourse. But this treatment, while what I have offered is protected under the patronage of the truth of the gospel, will be easily supported, as the effect of the greatest prejudices can extend no further in this land, where liberty is so fully established and defended.

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How far the early and rooted prejudices and prepossessions, or evil habits which men labour under the influence of, to whom the injunctions in the gospel make their plain appeal, if they would unbiaſſedly attend to them, as cauſes why they do not obſerve this rite according as he has therein inſtituted it, are or are not excuſeable in the ſight of God, is none of my buſineſs, or the leaſt of my intention to determine upon this as it ought to be, is entirely left to his unerring judgement, who will do what is right. My ultimate intention and deſign is, only to ſtate what appears to me he has revealed in his word concerning this rite, as it reſpects one of the primary and important ends of it, *i. e.* to ſave men, or through which he grants remiſſion of ſins. It would be utterly unbecoming me, or any man, to judge or decide upon a ſubject for which we have neither adequate abilities, nor the leaſt right. To his own maſter every man ſtandeth or falleth. However, if the perſons we refer to judge themſelves really authoriſed and alſo juſtified in aſſerting, He that does not, as the Scripture requires, believe in Chriſt as the Son of God, cannot be ſaved; they certainly ought to forgive, or at leaſt think favourably of what I have offered, from the expreſs words of Chriſt, that, He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, illuſtrated and confirmed to be his genuine meaning by the like declarations of his inſpired apoſtles; becauſe, if, without deſerving the charge of uncharitableneſs, they

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urge such a belief is indispensibly obligatory thereto, surely, from testimonies equally clear, authoritative and unerring, I may be allowed the same liberty, concerning the indispensable obligation of baptism, seeing Jesus hath affirmed what was just mentioned.

I AM aware, it may be objected to the subject treated of in the subsequent pages, or one of its principal consequences, that if it is founded in truth, I am unchristianizing what is called the Christian world: should I do this, to that part of it who are entitled to no more than the mere name of Christians, I trust, that neither they nor genuine Christianity will thereby sustain any real injury. Whether the greater part of them are or are not of this number, is submitted to the unbiaſſed and diſpaſſionate conſideration and judgement of thoſe who compare their principles and lives with the precepts of the goſpel, and the example of Chriſt; they perhaps may ſay, in St. Paul's words, put in the mouth of a mere natural ſon of Abraham, What advantage then hath the Jew? or, What profit is there of circumciſion? To which I beg leave to anſwer, if this conſequence follows only from a true ſtatement of the conſtituent laws or injunctions eſtabliſhed in the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, who is anſwerable for it themſelves, the author of theſe ſheets, or the Chriſtian Legiſlator? If they do not obſerve them, as he has required, or follow his own example in ſubmitting to this rite, as one of thoſe laws or inſtitutes; Are they or the Law-giver

giver the cause of the consequence taking place just mentioned? If they attribute it to him, let them appeal to the law and to the testimony, and by that rule alone judge impartially upon it. If that decides in their favour against it, they ought to fix the blame not upon him, but upon the author they are reading, for so far misrepresenting the laws of his kingdom: but if that does not decide in their favour, but entirely against them, then certainly, in justice to Him, the author they are reading, and, I add, to themselves, they ought to fix it upon those who do not, but may avoid it, by observing those laws.

To prevent any misconstruction of what I have said, upon being saved by baptism, as though I believe it to comprize the whole design and end of it; I observe, that in the Scripture there is plainly represented two other ends connected therewith: One is, that it is an initiating rite into the kingdom of God, or the gospel dispensation; and the other is, that thereby the subject is laid under, as well as he lays himself under, additional and sacred obligations to walk in newness of life, without which he cannot finally be saved.

For the proof of the former, see Matthew xxi, 31, 32; Luke iii, 12, 13, compared with chap. vii, 29, 30. The texts which point out the latter are, Matt. xxviii, 19, 20; Rom. vi, 1, &c. Col. ii, 11, 12; iii, 1, &c. Rom. viii, 1, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13; Ephes. iv, 21---24, besides many other passages to the same purpose.



SHOULD any, who are members of the established Church, or advocates for its Liturgy, object that too much stress is laid on baptism, as that through which men are saved, or obtain remission of sins, I request them unbiassedly to read over the service of infant-sprinkling, in the Book of Common Prayer, where they will see, that the compilers have laid the like stress upon the observance even of that unscriptural ceremony.

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A DISCOURSE

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A  
DISCOURSE  
ON THE  
WORDS of CHRIST,

MARK XVI, 16.

HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED, SHALL BE  
SAVED; BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT, SHALL  
BE DAMNED.

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**I**N the following observations upon these words concerning baptism, it is not my intention to attend to them either as it respects the mode or manner of administering it, as represented in the New Testament, or what is there related are the indispensable qualifications of candidates for that institution, and therefore, if touched upon, will be unavoidable in treating the subject. My principal view is, to consider what ground there is in the latter clause of the verse to build in part this opinion upon, *viz.* that because Jesus said, He that believeth not (and did not add, is not baptized) shall be damned; therefore it is inferred, he lays much more stress upon believing, than being baptized, in  
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order to a man's escaping damnation, and consequently, in his judgement, believing is essential to a man's being saved, but baptism is not. For it is said, if he had laid equal stress upon a man's observing the latter as possessing the former, he would have added that also as a cause or reason why he will be damned, as well as his not believing; on which account many urge, that if a man is really possessed of what they call a saving, or evangelical faith, it is a matter of no real importance to his being saved, whether he submits to this institution or not, founded partly upon what Jesus said in the text.

I PRESUME that even the persons we are speaking of cannot fairly object to a candid, impartial, and thorough examination of the words under consideration, comparing them with other texts, to see whether such an opinion of the inefficacy of baptism, as instituted in the New Testament, to save men, is really inferrable from them. If it is, I am sure, there is no person who will more readily join issue on that side of the question, as I would always found my opinion upon the manifest intention of the Institutor, in observing ritual appointments, as well as not lay a greater stress upon them than he has expressly declared in enjoining them. And when those who profess a real regard to the laws of Jesus Christ are truly disposed to investigate the subject with calmness and deliberation, laying aside, as much as possible, the bias of early and long established prepossessions, they will be better prepared to see the real truth in what he has said and required, concerning the rite of baptism.

I WOULD have it particularly observed, that the words of the text are a compendium of doctrine and precept, included in our Lord's last charge or commission to his apostles, after he was risen, of what they were to preach or teach men, after his ascension. In Matthew xxviii, 19, 20, it is, All power



is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—In Luke xxiv, 47, it is thus expressed: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.—In these words, compared with the text, it is indisputably plain and certain, that in this charge or commission to his apostles, to preach the gospel, baptism is included as a real part of it. This is as evident and unquestionable, as that they are required to preach repentance and remission of sins, because they are alike expressed in the commission, the former, as well as the latter. For them to have omitted preaching the former would, therefore, have been as great a neglect or omission as their not promulgating the latter. The former, therefore, is as real a part of their commission from Christ to preach as the latter. And as a farther proof of this, we shall see they acted according thereto after Jesus was ascended, when they preached the gospel to all nations, or to every creature.

BEFORE I advert to the words of the text, I would just observe, by believing, I understand our Lord to mean, believing him to be the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. See Rom. x, 9. And by being saved, he primarily intends obtaining the remission of sins that was to be preached in his name or acceptance with God.

THESE definitions of faith, and being saved, I would be understood always to intend throughout this discourse.

WHEN I say, that by baptism men are saved, possibly some persons may be led to draw this unfair inference, that hereby I lay no stress upon, or set aside the efficacy of the sacrifice and death of Christ, as not a propitiation for the sins of men; to prevent which, I most sincerely believe, that God hath set him forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

IN the words under consideration Jesus saith, He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved.

If it cannot, consistent with the plain meaning of the words, be denied, that believing is made indispensibly obligatory to be saved, no more can it that he has in like manner made baptism also indispensibly obligatory to obtain it, because what he has predicated of the former, he has also of the latter.

If to separate or unconnect believing from being saved, is a manifest and real perversion of his words, because he has inseparably joined them together, making the latter depend on the former, it is equally so to separate being saved from baptism, because he has in a like manner joined them together also.

THESE observations, I presume, cannot well be evaded or denied, till from parallel passages it is shewn, that this is not the meaning of the words, or that the apostles, the truest, most correct, and ample expositors of his design in them, did not thus understand him, by proving either that in fulfilling this commission they did not preach or administer that rite, by or through which men were to be saved, or obtain remission of sins, or they taught the people that the obligation of that institution was not equally required with that of believing, to obtain it. Neither of which can be made appear, because the contrary is evident, as will be seen further on.

HOWEVER,



HOWEVER, let us try whether we cannot illustrate, and confirm what we have observed is the natural and obvious meaning of our Lord's words. To which purpose, suppose any one to affirm, He that is baptized shall be saved, though he does not possess an evangelical belief; I ask, Whether any one of the persons we have before mentioned, who say, that by believing only a man may be saved, will assent to such an explanation of the words, as fully expressing our Lord's intention in them, and therefore to be admitted as his genuine meaning? I am persuaded there is not even one of them that would acquiesce in or approve of such a sense of them, but assert it is doing great violence to them and the intention of the speaker. But may we not ask, On what account, or for what reason it would be subverting his intention in the words? The plain and decisive answer certainly is, because Jesus hath joined believing also as equally requisite thereto, and therefore, to take away, or represent it as of little or no obligation, must be exceedingly derogatory to his plain meaning or design. Besides, it would be justly added, that it is inconsistent with what is plain the apostles understood him to intend in the words, for in preaching the gospel, or in prosecuting his commission, they required men to believe, as a requisite condition to their being saved, as is evidently and repeatedly related in their discourses contained in the Acts. I presume it will be allowed, these considerations are strictly just and conclusive, to prove, that whoever asserts, He that is baptized only shall be saved, does great injustice to our Saviour's intention in the words, who hath made believing also a requisite condition, or obligation thereto.

BUT farther I observe, suppose any one on the other side of the question to maintain this position, viz. He that believeth shall be saved, though he is  
not



not baptized. Is this doing more justice to our Lord's intention in the words, as it respects the rite of baptism, than what we observed of believing only? Or is it not doing equal injustice to them? The latter surely must be owned by every person, who would be thought to judge impartially, and for this plain and unanswerable reason, *viz.* because he equally requires the observance of that rite as well as believing. Both of them, and not the latter only, are made requisite requirements to be saved. Believing therefore, is no more nor less required therein whereby to be saved than being baptized, and *vice versa*. In the words of Jesus they are put upon an equality, he not having preferred one to the other to be saved.

If it can be made appear, that he has preferred the former to be saved, it must be shewn from what he has elsewhere said upon it, which, I presume, cannot be done, or else, that the apostles understood him in that light, and this evidently collected from their discourses after he ascended in fulfilling this commission. But this is so far from being capable of proof from thence, that from them it appears they also likewise insisted upon and enjoined the obligation of the latter, as well as the former, agreeable to the words of the commission, and therefore, their preaching faith, or believing in Christ, is a strong proof in what sense they understood that part of it, and of consequence it ought to be allowed that they, as well as Jesus, enjoined on men the observance of baptism, as well as believing. In this they closely adhered to the intention of their Lord. This will appear further on.

If therefore, it is a perversion of his words to affirm, that believing is not a requisite requirement in the gospel whereby to be saved, at least, that it is perfectly indifferent thereto; so likewise, and for reasons and proofs equally conclusive, is it also a  
perversion

perversion of them to affirm, that baptism is not in like manner therein as expressly and explicitly required to obtain that end. Whoever, therefore, admits that believing is therein required as indispensibly obligatory thereto, ought to admit the same concerning that institution. Consequently, those who in sentiment and practice renounce that rite as not indispensibly obligatory on men to be saved, if consistent with themselves, must do the same of believing. From hence it appears, that no person can consistently plead for the obligation of the latter, and not admit the force of it, as it respects the former. What, therefore, by Jesus, God in his word hath joined together, let no man put asunder, especially those who make very great profession of being governed in their faith and practice by the command and example of Jesus Christ.

WHEN I say, that from the words of Jesus elsewhere, no person can consistently insist upon the obligation of believing alone, whereby to be saved, I mean, that in no other passage has he so represented it, in diminution or setting aside the obligation of being baptized to obtain it. For however he may have spoken of believing, as that by or through which men are to be saved, yet it cannot be fair to detach such of his expressions from those under consideration, as to make them oppose or clash against them, as he has expressly affirmed, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Had he not in this, or in any other declaration he made, inseparably connected both together, whereby to be saved, perhaps the proof of the obligation of the latter might not have appeared so clear, full, and demonstrable as it does now, though the obligation of baptism in the light here pleaded for would have appeared evident from other passages of the New Testament. But the connection, in which he himself hath placed them, they cannot be separated, or the inefficacy of either  
made



made appear, or that the obligation to observe one is greater than that of the other, to be saved.

BUT I observe further, suppose any one to affirm, that neither believing nor baptism are required, to be saved, and consequently make wholly void what Jesus hath said in the text of both, Would it not appear to those, who plead for the obligation of the former to be saved, a very unjustifiable perversion of it? Nay, Would they not urge, that this with a witness strikes at the root of the gospel revelation? But here I ask the reason, Why it has this direct tendency? I suppose the answer will be, Because in the text, and also in many other passages, Jesus hath made believing at least an indispensable requirement to be saved, and without which he has affirmed, a man shall be damned. But can any man produce a more substantial, decisive, or justifiable authority to make void one of them, than he who does the like of both. If he can, let him offer it. But this is not practicable. However, was this assumed by any one, as it respects the institution of baptism, he could not but grant the other is equally possessed of the like authority to suppress or set aside both of them. And if the former denies, that any man is invested with such a power, it will unavoidably follow, the latter is not, respecting that rite, and consequently, if he believes it to be unlawful and unjustifiable, whenever assumed, by parity of reason, his must be also. But if it is a perversion and abuse of our Lord's words, to make void or set aside both of them, as not obligatory to be saved, so must it likewise of one of them, *viz.* baptism. Is not a disuse of that rite merely because it is judged incapable of saving men, and setting up a man's own understanding and judgement concerning the expediency or saving efficacy of an institution of Jesus Christ, at least as equal to his, or rather superior? Naaman's opinion of the waters of Damascus to cure him, was much greater than those of Jordan.



Jordan. But do those men believe his opinion was more justly founded than that of the prophet, as directed of God? Do they concur in his opinion? Most certainly not, and why? Because he did not consider what was the virtue or efficacy of the latter, when made salutary by the power of the God of Israel to cure him. Was he not convinced of his error? Most certainly he was; but these men are not. Can even they doubt, that the same God can equally make the washing of regeneration as his own appointment, as effectual to wash away their sins, as the other to cure the leprosy? Do they believe Naaman was wiser than God, in preferring the waters of Damascus to those of Jordan, because he was persuaded they were more salutary? And, Are those really wiser than he, who neglect or treat as perfectly indifferent that rite which God has instituted to save men, *because they are persuaded it cannot have that effect, even in opposition to what a greater prophet than Elijah has said, who affirmed what is contained in the text?*

BUT if in so plain a case as that we are treating, it is possible to add light and strength to the obvious and natural meaning of the words of the text, and what hath been observed upon them I will examine whether the apostles, to whom Christ's final commission was given, understood them agreeable to what has been represented, or according to the interpretation of those who maintain, that believing only is required of men to be saved, and that baptism is not indispensably obligatory thereto. And, I think, it will, without dispute, be allowed by every man, who is really impartial, that their discourses, which contain the account of their executing that commission, or preaching the gospel, as recorded by Luke, are the truest explanation of their Lord's meaning, and therefore, in what light they understand them.

IN prosecuting which, we are naturally led to take notice of the first discourse they preached to the Jews, after his ascension, which is contained in the second chapter of the Acts. There it is related, upon Peter's proving to them, that he, whom they had crucified, was the Christ, the Son of God, evinced to be that person, by his being raised from the dead, and shedding down on them the Holy Ghost; some of them, convinced of the great sin they thereby had committed, say to him, and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? That is, what doth God, against whom we are now conscious we have sinned, require of us by you that we may be forgiven of him? To which Peter answered, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins*. Their believing Jesus is the Son of God is manifestly included in their being convinced of the great sin they had committed, in putting him to death. Though Luke hath not recorded Peter's asking them, as Philip did the eunuch, Whether they believed? *i. e.* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? Yet, I presume, it must appear most probable to every one, who attentively reads and compares together all their discourses. If this is admitted, I ask, Whether Peter's address or direction to them does not entirely coincide with the obvious and genuine meaning of the commission under consideration, when he says, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, or by which to be saved or forgiven of God? See 1 Peter, iii, 21.

IF it cannot be fairly denied, Peter made repentance indispensibly obligatory on them to obtain remission of sins, so neither can it, that he enjoined on them baptism also, as alike obligatory thereto, because he has as much annexed the promise of it the latter as to the former, It would, therefore, be an equal



equal perversion of his words to affirm, they were promised remission of sins on repentance alone, as it would be to assert the same on their being baptized without repenting. Consequently, the only natural meaning of the words is, that repentance and baptism are enjoined on them as indispensable obligations to obtain it. That this is his plain, unequivocal meaning, is incontestibly proved from what is related of some of the persons to whom the words were addressed, who gladly receiving his word (*i. e.* that remission of sins was to be obtained upon repentance and baptism) were baptized. Hereby the Lord added to the church, that is, to the disciples of Jesus, daily, such as should be (*i. e.* were) saved. For Peter testified and exhorted the Jews, saying, Save yourselves (*i. e.* by complying with what I preach) from this untoward or sinful generation.

FROM the words of Peter under consideration, and the natural observations on them, we may farther discern the importance of the institution of baptism in the gospel dispensation to be saved, or obtain the remission of sins.

ANOTHER relation, similar with the foregoing, as it respects remission of sins being obtainable by baptism, is what is related concerning Saul and Ananias, Acts ix. Jesus appeared to the former going from Jerusalem to Damascus, who told him, that his persecuting spirit and conduct manifested against his disciples he considered as done to himself. In the conversation between them, Jesus directed him to go to that city, where it should be told him what he must do. From this appearance he was convinced, that Jesus is the Messiah. That he might inform him of what he must do, as the command of God, he appeared in a vision to Ananias, giving him instructions what to speak to him. After he came to Saul, and they had compared what Christ had revealed to each of them, he said to him, The God of our fathers hath chosen



thee, that thou shouldest know his will—And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, *and wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord; and he arose, and was baptized. Acts xx, 16; ix, 18.

FROM an unbiaſed attention to the whole of the relation concerning Saul and Ananias, contained in this chapter, and as it is repeated by the former, related in other parts of the Acts, one would believe that it can hardly admit of a question, much leſs be denied, that the laſt-mentioned words include part of the commiſſion or meſſage Jeſus ſent him to deliver to Saul, concerning what he muſt do. If it was, we clearly diſcern the perfect coincidence of them with the commiſſion Chriſt gave the apoſtles, and thoſe words of Peter to the Jews juſt noticed, which are an additional proof, that by baptiſm men are ſaved, or obtain the remiſſion of ſins. If the words of Ananias do naturally, and without any force put upon them, admit of this explanation, it is clear, that his judgement accords perfectly with both of them. And it alſo points out the true and important end why he urged his being baptized, and alſo, why Saul ſubmitted thereto, *i. e.* to obtain remiſſion of ſins, which he was made ſenſible he ſtood in need of as the chiefſt of ſinners, as he calls himſelf, and on which account he was truly thankful, 2 Tim. i, 12, &c. But if the obſerving that rite is not an indiſpenſible requirement in the goſpel, by which men are to be ſaved, it cannot be doubted but Ananias knew this, and therefore, that it could not be included in the meſſage he received from Jeſus, to tell him what he muſt do. Admitting this not to be a true ſtate of the caſe, I aſk, What ſatisfactory reaſons can be aſſigned, why he who could not but know this ſhould urge upon him this rite eſpecially to waſh away his ſins, or to be ſaved. One would have thought that had his opinion concerning this inſtitution been the ſame with that pleaded for  
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in our day, he would have relied upon his believing or faith alone, as a genuine one by which to be saved, or obtain remission of sins, and have been wholly silent upon the other, or at least, that he would not have pressed it in the manner and for the end related by Saul himself. For, I suppose, it will not admit of a doubt, that as far as believing could obtain for him the remission of sins, he already possessed it as produced in him by Jesus himself. But it is clear, that Ananias judged as well as acted differently, and one would naturally conclude from the whole relation, that he, as living in that day, and having received a special message from Christ, should be by far the most competent and unexceptionable judge in the case. He, therefore, believing his faith alone was not of itself a sufficient qualification to obtain it, said to him, Brother Saul, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.

THE next case I would mention recorded in the Acts, which I persuade myself will corroborate the reasoning on the foregoing instances, is that of Paul, Silas, and the jayler, at Philippi, Acts xvi. The shaking the foundation of the prison, loosing every prisoner's bands, and yet none escaping, had so great an effect upon the jayler, just awaked out of sleep, that as soon as he had recollected himself, he ran to them, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? It is plain, the enquiry is, What he must do to be saved, (the promise of which is contained in the text, upon believing and being baptized) and their direction certainly ought to correspond therewith. This is related in these words—They said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. In the next verse, it is evident, that in speaking to him the word of the Lord, by which he and his house were to be saved, they included and enjoined on him the obligation of baptism also; for the



the same night he was baptized, and all his, straightway.

LUKE's relating their being baptized, and yet omitting the mention of that rite in what he says of Paul's preaching to him the word of the Lord, is similar with his recording the eunuch's being baptized of Philip, in which he has not mentioned baptism in what he records of his preaching Jesus to him.

PAUL and Silas proposing and enjoining belief or faith in Christ, and the observance of baptism, by which they were to be saved, are constituent parts of the word of the Lord which they spake to them, and is perfectly coincident with the words under consideration, and additionally illustrates their genuine import.

SHOULD any one reply to what hath been observed, that the text relates, they enjoined believing only, by which he and his house should be saved, but that there is not the least mention of their requiring them to be baptized to be saved, and therefore, that they did not either enjoin or administer it for that end. I grant, that Luke is silent on that head, but if that is admitted as a good proof of it, because it is not particularly related, it will equally follow that the jailer did not believe in Christ, for that he did, is not mentioned in the context. But such insignificant criticisms have no weight with any, but those who are disposed to cavil at and evade the force of plain relations of facts.

LUKE has recorded another case, not to be omitted in treating the subject before us, and that is, of Cornelius, &c. Acts x, whom the angel directed to send for Peter, that he might tell him what he ought to do or hear words of him, whereby he and all his house should be saved. Of whose character the angel thus speaks: Thy prayers, and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. Or as his servant



vant represents it to Peter; He is a just man, and one that feareth God with all his house, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.

WHEN Peter came to Cornelius, and they had compared together the vision to each of them, he spake or preached to him what is contained in verses 34—43. While he continued speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on him, his kinsmen, and others, whom he had invited to be present at his coming. On its falling on them, and their speaking with tongues, and prophesying, his companions were astonished, that on the Gentiles also (as well as on the Jews) was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. To whom Peter said, Can any man (*i. e.* any of you my companions) forbid water, that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? By which question he did not intend to ask them, Whether baptism was obligatory on Jews who believed, with them, this was past dispute; but it was simply this, Whether it was consistent with the purpose of God in the new covenant, that uncircumcised Gentiles should be admitted to that institution, and thereby initiated into the kingdom of Christ, and united therein with Jewish believers, as of the same body of whom Christ is the alone head? This is the question, Whether this step was included or not in the design of Christ (in the commission he gave to the apostles to preach the gospel to all nations, or to every creature) baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c. Till this event, Peter, as well as the other apostles, and all the Jewish Christians, believed it was not included therein. But the vision from God to Cornelius and Peter, fully convinced the latter, it was now his purpose to receive them also therein.

FOR before these things occurred, he said, Cornelius himself knew how that it was an unlawful thing for a man, that is, a Jew, to keep company  
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or come into one of another nation; and therefore, till that time, the gospel had been preached to none but Jews only. Upon these united testimonies, therefore, Peter had of what was God's intention hereby, he opened his mouth and said, Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. He, knowing what we have mentioned had been the undisputed opinion of his companions, asks them, Whether they were not now convinced of the purpose of God, as he was, that they should receive the uncircumcised Gentiles to be his people, as well as the Jews; if they were, whether they could, consistent therewith, object to their being baptized, upon their believing, as well as Jews? They not objecting, he commanded them to be baptized, in the name of the Lord.

UPON this fair statement of the case, as it respects the question, Whether it was allowable to baptize them, and the assent given in the affirmative, I ask, Whether it is not justly inferrable from Peter's proposing the administering that rite, and commanding them to be baptized, that it is part of that which the angel told Cornelius he ought to do, or of the words he was to speak to him, whereby he and all his house should be saved? If it is granted to be comprehended therein, it indisputably proves the observing that institution is included as a part of the word, whereby he and all his house were to obtain it. This instance manifestly illustrates what we have observed on his discourse to the Jews, chap ii, and what Paul preached or said to the jayler, concerning himself and his house.

SHOULD any assert, that his proposing baptism to Cornelius, and commanding him to be baptized, is no part of the word he was sent to speak to him, by which he and his house were to be saved, we may ask for the proofs of this from the context. If it is said,

said, this appears, because therein it is not expressly said to be a part of the message he was sent to deliver to him. I answer, if that is admitted as a real proof of it, it must likewise, that what he spake to him, verses 34—43, is not, because it is not said in the chapter to be so, any more than the other, and then it will follow, that there is no account contained in the whole relation of what were the words he spake to him, by which he and all his house were to be saved.

If it is asserted, that what he spake to him in those verses is a real part of it, because therein is contained the relation of his preaching Christ, that he might believe in him, as required in the gospel, to be saved, and contained in the commission of Christ to the apostles, which they were to promulgate to Jews and Gentiles. If this is a proof of it, it will also equally prove, that his commanding them to be baptized is as real a part of it, because it is alike comprized and included in the same commission to be saved, as that of believing or faith in Christ. Either, therefore, his proposing baptism, and commanding him to be baptized, ought to be admitted to be a real part of it, or else, the other must be denied to be a real part of it. If the foregoing considerations prove, that Peter's proposing baptism is a real part of the word he was sent to speak to him, it will appear, that by observing it he was to be saved, in connection with what in those verses he taught him to believe concerning Jesus being the Messiah.

BUT there is one peculiar circumstance related concerning Cornelius not to be omitted, which is, that notwithstanding he, as well as Peter, had unquestionable proof of his prayers, &c. coming up for a memorial before God, previous to Peter's coming to him, and his receiving the Holy Ghost before baptism, yet Peter commanded him to be baptized. But had his sentiments and conduct concern-



ing that institution been the same with that of many ministers, and others, in our day, he would not have commanded him to be baptized, to be saved, believing that his having received the spirit of God was a just ground on which to depend for his obtaining it. But surely it must be owned, that there is not an instance now to be found equally unexceptionable, of any one having received it. But admitting there are any to be found equal thereto, yet it is undeniable, that the apostle's opinion and conduct decides in favour of their being baptized to be saved; and yet, notwithstanding this decided case, are there not many, who plead, that because (as they affirm) a man is converted by the spirit of Christ, he need not submit thereto, to obtain remission of sins, or be saved. To such an one they urge it is needless. But so far as Peter's judgement and conduct is allowed to be an unanswerable reply, it decides absolutely against such an opinion, and a total neglect of that institution; for he is so far from urging Cornelius's prayers, &c. coming up for a memorial before God, and his having received the Holy Ghost, as reasons why he ought not to be baptized, that he considers the latter testimony as a reason why he ought to submit thereto, and not as a reason against it, as is very improperly urged by many in this day, respecting those said to be converted to Christ by his spirit.

IF they allow the apostle was infallibly acquainted with the mind of his Lord, herein, they certainly err, not sufficiently attending to the Scripture. The case of Cornelius then shews us plainly, that being remembered before God and receiving the Holy Spirit, is not, under the gospel dispensation, any just reason why even such an one need not submit to this rite, whereby to be saved; but, on the contrary, he is under equal obligation to observe it as well as others.

SHOULD

SHOULD any urge, that Cornelius's prayers and alms coming up for a memorial before God, is a proof, that thereby he was saved, or obtained remission of sins, and not by the word Peter spake to him; I answer, admitting that to be the proper meaning of the angel's words, yet they respect him alone, and do not include his house or the rest of the company, who with him heard the word spoken by Peter. That Cornelius himself did not understand the angel's words in that sense seems at least most probable from what he said to Peter, but that he expected to be saved by the word he was to speak to him. For after he came to his house, he said to him, I sent to thee, and thou hast well done, that thou art come now, therefore are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Now the only thing related, which he commanded him to do, was to be baptized, in the name of the Lord.

AGREEABLE to which words is what Peter's contending brethren at Jerusalem say to him, Acts xi. Then hath God also to the Gentiles (as well as to us Jews) granted repentance unto life, *i. e.* through or by his ministry, or in Peter's words to the apostles, elders, and brethren, Men and brethren, ye know, how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles (*viz.* Cornelius, &c.) should hear the word of the gospel and believe: We believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we (Jews) shall be saved, even as they (Gentiles). If therefore, it cannot but be admitted, that the former were saved by the grace of Christ, manifested in the gospel, so must it likewise of the latter, *i. e.* Cornelius, &c.

FINALLY, I observe, that in no part of what Luke relates concerning Cornelius, has he given even the least hint, that he was saved by his prayers and alms coming up for a memorial before God; but, on the

contrary, plain proofs that it was by the word spoken to him by Peter, of which baptism is as real a part, as his preaching to him Jesus.

BUT further; I am not unaware it may be urged, that Cornelius, &c. were saved previous to their being baptized, by or through the Holy Ghost falling on them. To which I reply, that from the whole of what is related chap. x, and as repeated chap. xi, xv, it appears exceeding evident, that the primary and ultimate design and end of that interposition, in connection with the other uncommon manifestations attending his being visited of God, were to convince and satisfy the apostles, and all the Jewish believers, that it was now his intention and purpose to take the uncircumcised Gentiles into the kingdom of the Messiah, as well as the Jews.

AND it may here be justly observed, that on neither occasion, as already mentioned, does Peter, or any of his brethren, give even the least hint, that they considered it in any other point of light than that now mentioned; much less have they declared, that thereby they were saved.

I MIGHT here justly add like kind of observations with the foregoing, upon the relation given, Acts viii, of Philip preaching Christ, or the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ to the Samaritans, and his preaching Christ to the eunuch. Concerning the former it is related, that in consequence of his preaching those things to them they believed Philip, and were baptized, both men and women. Upon his preaching Jesus to the latter, he said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? to whom, as a believer in Christ, he administered that institution.

THESE several cases thus plainly related, evince, that explaining the design, and urging the obligation of baptism, is a constituent part of preaching Christ, or the gospel agreeable to Christ's commission,



mission, and consequently this rite is therein enjoined as well as believing, whereby to be saved. Whoever, therefore, preaches Christ and repentance, and yet represents that institution as not indispensably obligatory to obtain it, in connection with faith in Christ and repentance, do not, as the apostles and Philip did, preach him.

THIS, I presume, cannot but be admitted, till it is made appear, either that baptism is not a constituent part of their preaching Christ, or in that particular they preached what was no essential part of it; the latter of which, I suppose, will not in plain terms be asserted.

To corroborate and illustrate the foregoing proofs, that by baptism men are saved, or obtain remission of sins, we will transcribe what is recorded of the first institution of this rite to John Baptist, and the end on account of which he administered it. That he practised it as a right of divine appointment is undeniable from his own words, who saith, I knew him not, (*i. e.* Jesus, before he came to be baptized,) but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. As it is indisputable this message came from God, so is it equally true, that it was He who sent him to baptize with water.

THAT he administered it for the remission of sins, or by which to be saved, is declared by the evangelist: John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance *for the remission of sins*. To whose baptism went out all the land of Judea, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins.

BEFORE I close what I have to offer under this part of the subject, I beg leave to make the following observations to those who strenuously plead for the indispensable obligation of faith in Christ alone, to be saved, *viz.* many of them believe, that in administering

ministering the service of infant sprinkling, the passive subject thereby obtains remission of original sin, and deliverance from wrath to come, though it is utterly incapable of faith in Christ. In these instances it is undeniable, those persons wholly dispence with the obligation of faith to be saved, notwithstanding they urge, that men cannot be saved unless they believe in Christ. But I add, what is yet more extraordinary, and not easily to be reconciled therewith, disown a saving efficacy in baptism as instituted in the New Testament, notwithstanding Christ and his ministers have declared, that those who believe and are baptized, shall be saved. But surely, such an opinion and conduct is no evident proof, that they make the word of God the true and alone rule of their faith and practice; for as they believe there is such a saving efficacy in the former service, certainly they ought not to deny there is at least as great an one in the latter.

I would further observe, that the persons we are now speaking of would, I persuade myself, justly and strenuously object to being saved by believing or faith in John Baptist, and not in Christ, and the reason is both plain and indisputable, *viz.* because God hath required it to be exercised in the latter, and not in the former, to be saved. But if it is owned, that the latter is indispensibly obligatory thereto, because it is required in the gospel both by Christ and his apostles, the reason holds equally strong and conclusive in favour of observing baptism to be saved. And if it is a just and unanswerable reason against the former, because it is not appointed or required of God therein for that end, it is equally conclusive against the practice mentioned above, to save from original sin and the wrath to come, because it is not enjoined in the New Testament.

NOTWITHSTANDING what hath been advanced, from clear and expresse testimonies of Scripture, to shew  
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that the promise of being saved, or obtaining remission of sins, is therein plainly annexed to being baptized upon faith and repentance, yet it is not improbable but many may object to the force and conclusiveness of them, by urging, that the ministers of Christ enjoined and practised that rite only as a proof or manifestation of the love or gratitude to God of those who were converted to Christ, and not for their obtaining the end just mentioned, for that those persons say they receive upon being converted to him by his spirit.

To which I answer, that if only a single instance is produced in the New Testament, in which the ministers of Christ plainly represent that to be the true and proper design and end of baptism, and that they so practised it, I will give up the point, and own myself in an error, in the foregoing reasoning upon every text urged in favour of what I have pleaded for, of men's being saved by baptism.

To the foregoing observations, illustrating the obvious meaning of Jesus in the text, as a part of his final commission to his apostles, I shall add, that as the efficacy of believing or faith in Christ, through which to be saved, is originally and entirely derived from the will or good pleasure of God, as set forth in the gospel, both by Christ and his apostles, and independent of which it cannot effect that end for the believer; so in like manner, the real efficacy of the institution of baptism as instituted by him, in observing it, by which to be saved, is equally derived from the same original and efficient cause, and independent of which it cannot save any one that submits thereto, any more than the other; therefore, the former is not in the gospel of greater efficacy or importance to save men than the latter. That rite, therefore, in this view of both, is as efficacious to save men as believing, and the former as the latter, because in the text Jesus, joining them together,  
faith,



faith, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Therefore, to assert, that believing is efficacious to save men, but the other is not, is doing a real injury, by lessening the obligation and importance of one of the appointments of God in the gospel, which Jesus certainly discountenances in the text. This cannot but be the consequence, unless it is proved from indisputable authority, that in other passages he or his apostles have expressly, or by necessary consequence from what they have said of each, declared there is that difference between them.

I PRESUME it needs no formal proof to make it appear, that assenting to the confession made by the eunuch, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, cannot, independent of what he hath declared concerning faith in Christ, save any man, any more than his believing John Baptist is sent of God, or than being baptized; and, therefore, whatever virtue or efficacy there is in believing Jesus Christ is the Son of God to be saved, must, as we observed, arise from his having so appointed it to answer that end or purpose to the believer. And this is equally evident and certain as it respects baptism. Therefore, believing or faith, though truly evangelical, can no more save men than the other, but as appointed of God. And *vice versa*. Faith, or believing, as St. Paul saith Rom. iv, of God alone is imputed or reckoned to the believer for righteousness or justification, like as Abraham's was to him. But, I presume, no one will assert, or attempt to prove, that his faith abstractedly considered entitled him thereto. For, previous to that time, he believed in God's promise concerning his seed, as well as then, but it did not obtain for him, nor was it imputed to him, for righteousness. His faith being imputed to him for that end was of God alone, or by his declaration only. In a like manner, being saved by baptism is having remission of sins, imputed or reckoned to him, who repenting

repenting and believing is baptized. If these considerations are justly deduced from the words of the commission, and those other similar passages which have been produced and urged in illustration thereof, it evidently follows, that in the gospel of the kingdom of Christ, believing or faith is not in and of itself any more the primary or efficient cause or ground of men's being saved, than being baptized, and consequently ought not to have a preference to that rite, because an impartial regard to each law or institute of the gospel should be manifested by every genuine Christian. Whoever, therefore, depends wholly on believing or faith to be saved, and not on baptism also for obtaining that end, grounded on some particular texts, exhibits a very disadvantageous representation of the latter, and which certainly is not countenanced by Christ and his apostles, as we have seen. Therefore, in preaching the gospel to teach men that they are to be saved by believing alone, is by no means continuing to fulfil his commission to his apostles as his ministers, but is a great deviation from, nay, opposition thereto, as great as to preach, that by baptism only men are to be saved. And was any one, who sustains the character of a minister of the gospel, to maintain the latter, as the real truth of God's word, I doubt not but those who plead what was just mentioned would not fail to represent him as a perverter of it, instead of preaching it, by neglecting to inculcate the obligation of believing, at least in connection with that rite.

BUT I appeal to those very persons, impartially to judge, whether they themselves are not chargeable with this very kind of conduct, in urging, that by faith alone men are saved?

IF it is allowed, that the apostles had no just authority to omit preaching repentance and remission  
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of sins ; so neither had they to omit that of baptism, and teach only the former, through which men are to be saved. Admitting this, I ask, Are any persons in our day possessed of a dispensing authority with respect to either ? or, Are they justified in assuming it, in preaching the gospel of the kingdom ? And yet persons of whom we are speaking, suppose they do not assume such an authority, but preach the pure, unsophisticated and unadulterated precepts and doctrines of Christianity ; while those, who insist that Jesus hath required the observance of baptism upon believing to be saved, are spoken of as making a saviour of that institution, and thereby rob Immanuel of his glory, as the alone Saviour of men.

It is not easy to assign any substantial reason, why men, who profess a peculiar zeal for primitive Christianity, should plead for and maintain the indispensable obligation of believing, or faith, to be saved, at the same time express the utmost indifference concerning the obligation of baptism to obtain that end, notwithstanding it is required by Christ and his apostles, to be saved, as well as faith ; and further, that all the virtue or efficacy of the former, to save the believer, does equally arise from, and depend upon the will or good pleasure of God as the latter, who hath appointed both. If it is said, baptism is a mere ritual service, that has not in itself any intrinsic worth or efficacy to save men, or not of the same importance to subserve the great ends of genuine Christianity, as believing or faith. I answer, I have granted, that the former, if unconnected with the will and appointment of God, hath no real efficacy to save men, but that is equally true also of the latter. And therefore, if little or no stress ought to be laid upon baptism, or wholly disused, as not efficacious to save men, so ought believing or faith  
also,



also, as equally inefficacious to answer that end. As we have observed, it is the authority which enjoins each and both, that renders them efficacious. And it is this alone, that makes all ritual or positive requirements effectual to obtain the end connected with the observing them, as is the case of the institution of sacrifices for sin. The offering, independent of the will and appointment of God, cannot take away sin, which under the law in some cases was by the offerer obtained, no more than the water of Jordan could have cured Naaman's leprosy, unless it had been made effectual by the power of God. On what account, therefore, men are induced to separate what God hath joined together, whereby to give remission of sins, and depend upon one appointment only to obtain it, and why they are led to prefer believing to that rite, no real or good reason can be offered from the New Testament.

As to the former subserving the true ends of genuine Christianity more than the latter, I believe is not so justly founded as to a superficial and partial eye may seem to appear, would they duly weigh all the appendages or concomitant particulars annexed to that rite, which are expressed in the New Testament. If, indeed, the decision in favour of believing is opposed to a rite, and the subject of it, substituted in the stead of that which God hath appointed, it certainly cannot but be admitted; but on the former being practised, it will not appear to be justly founded. But admitting believing or faith does affect that end more than baptism, is it right, as Paul saith of the gifts of the spirit, that the head should say to the hand, I have no need of thee? Most certainly not: for God hath set each injunction or institute in the gospel dispensation, as it hath pleased him. Nay, much more those things which  
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may seem feeble are necessary, and sometimes, that which men think less honourable, upon that God bestows more abundant honour. It is he that hath tempered them together, having given all due honour to that part which by men may seem to want it.

HAVING shewed that the efficacy of believing or faith to save men, originates wholly from the will or good pleasure of God alone, like as what the Scriptures declare concerning baptism also for obtaining that end, we will now attempt to shew, that the efficacy there is in the obedience and death of Christ to save men, does equally originate from, and depend upon the same primary and efficient cause as both the other. This appears to me unexceptionably plain and indisputable from the following passages: The apostle to the Hebrews, chap. x, comparing the sin-offerings under the law with that of Christ's, and shewing the complete efficacy of the latter to save the sinner, observes, Wherefore, when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, *but a body hast thou prepared me*. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin (under the law) thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, lo, I come (in the volume of the book is it written of me) to do thy will, O God. He (God) taketh away the first (sacrifices for sin) that he may establish the second (*viz.* that of Christ's). *By the which will (of God) we are sanctified*, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all. Compare John vi, 38 ; viii, 42.

THESE words do most explicitly and decisively affirm, that the first, true and alone cause of men's being sanctified, is the will of God ; and likewise, that the means or medium, namely, the offering the body of Jesus Christ, is also of his appointing. Consequently, that his offering himself is not the first,  
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but only the secondary cause of men's being sanctified; and therefore, its whole efficacy to sanctify men entirely proceeds from, and depends upon the will of God alone.

LET us attend to the apostles words in the following passages, wherein the same truth is plainly expressed and affirmed. Being justified freely by his (God's) grace, thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (*i.e.* mercy-seat) through faith in his blood to declare his (God's) righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii. To the Corinthians he affirms, But of him (God) are we in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us—sanctification and redemption. 1 Epist. i, 30. In his 2d Epist. chap. v, he tells them, All things (*i. e.* the primary and efficient cause of the new creation) are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ—God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He hath made him to be sin, for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. To the Ephesians, chap. ii, he observes, That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ. For by grace (*i. e.* God's) are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves (are ye saved); it is the gift of God. i, 5, 6, 7; 2 Tim. i, 9. Many more passages might be produced, but these are so clear and full to the purpose, that it seems unnecessary.

FROM these plain and undisguised expressions, it appears undeniable, that the entire efficacy in the obedience and death of Christ, to save men, or by  
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which they obtain remission of sins, is wholly derived from and depends upon the same will or good pleasure of God, as appointed of him to answer that end in the new covenant dispensation, and not that the obedience and death of Christ is the first or efficient cause of it. This is only a secondary one, in the hand of God, whose will he came to do. Indeed, this could not be, because that was subsequent to this appointment of his, in the plan of men's salvation, by or thro' the death or sacrifice of Christ, or his eternal purpose, which he purposed in him before the world began. The obedience and death of Christ, considered separate from the will of God, does not save men. Its effecting this end, as we have observed, is wholly in consequence of its being by the will of God appointed. But is not baptism also his appointment, and instituted to save men? This cannot, consistent with truth, be denied, because it is affirmed in the words of Christ and his apostles, as well as the other. Whoever, therefore, believes the former, because declared in the express words of Scripture, cannot but acknowledge the same of the latter, as likewise expressed therein. And whoever pleads for the obligation of believing the former whereby to be saved, because expressly required in the New Testament, ought, if consistent with himself, to do the same concerning baptism also, to be saved, because it is therein as plainly required to obtain that end. And therefore, whoever pleads, that that institution does not save men, should admit the same of the other, as being alike inefficacious to effect it, independent of the will of God, but as his appointments they are alike efficacious to accomplish it. I say, alike efficacious; for it is certain, the New Testament writers have not made any express distinction between them, *i. e.* of one being more or less efficacious than the other, to save men.

men. All human distinctions, therefore, can be no more than human, and as such, uncertain whether they are true or not, and of consequence not to be depended upon.

To prevent misunderstanding or perverting what I now say, I would observe, that the obedience and death of Christ, as comprehending a most amiable and glorious character, is not here in the least designed to be put upon a level with the performing the service of baptism. In this view there is no comparison, but as institutes or appointments of God in the gospel to save men; the efficacy of each and both are alike derived from and depend upon the will or good pleasure of God. They are both, as has been observed, mediums, by or through which He has promised to save men, or grant them remission of sins. Upon this part of our subject we may, with equal justice, remark, as we did on another part of it, that what God hath joined together in his word, let no man put asunder.

HAVING shewed that the observance of baptism is alike obligatory with believing or faith, whereby to be saved, which is the plain and natural meaning of our Lord in the text, it may be expected I should advert to that part of it, in which he saith, He that believeth not, shall be damned. The texts, which in other words this is expressed, are the following: I said, (saith Jesus) therefore, unto you, ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. The general and real cause of this unbelief and condemnation is described in these words: And this is the condemnation; that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were

were evil. For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, least his deeds should be reprov'd. John iii. Paul, speaking of the world, saith, That they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. On which account, they fall under condemnation, or damnation.

FROM these texts it is exceeding evident, that the damnation of the unbeliever is in consequence of his continuing under the influence of his wicked principles and conduct, which of itself renders him an object of the just displeasure of God. This, therefore, is the true and real cause of his condemnation. His not being baptized does not, therefore, constitute the true and proper cause of it, but that wickedness which refrains him from believing in Jesus, as the Scripture directs and commands. From whence it appears, that there was no occasion for our Lord to add, his not being baptized.

FIRST, from treating the foregoing subject, there arises this obvious inference, namely, a plain and forcible proof, that the Institutor of baptism did not intend or design it to be peculiar or confined to the apostolic age only, over and above the consideration of its being in the New Testament not expressly limited to that age, or repealed. For from thence it plainly appearing, that his design in it was, that sinners should be saved, or obtain remission of sins thereby, it cannot but be acknowledged they now stand in equal need of it, as those at that day; and therefore, it ought to be practised in obedience to his will, whereby to confer so great a blessing, promised to the unfeigned believing and obedient penitent.

WHOEVER, therefore, maintains, that faith in Christ to be saved, is not in its obligation confined to that day, but is now equally required of sinners,



sinners, to obtain that end, because enjoined both by Christ and his apostles, in their preaching the gospel for like reasons, those persons cannot but admit the same concerning baptism, as what ought also to be practised at this day, whereby they may be saved.

SECONDLY, I observe, it plainly appears that those ministers, who are persuaded they ought to preach or inculcate the obligation of believing or faith to be saved, because in the neglect of it they do not continue to fulfil the design of Christ in his commission to his apostles, nor therein follow their example, who invariably adhered thereto, ought to think themselves under the same obligation to preach and administer baptism also, for obtaining that end, because it is not only alike contained in that commission as well as the other, but also, was by them preached and practised for that end. If, therefore, they believe they are not justified in omitting the former, because thereby they most evidently neglect promulgating an essential part of that commission, and also are guilty of a great departure from the doctrines of the apostles concerning it, the reasons why they ought to preach the latter also are equally strong and conclusive, because being saved is a promise as much annexed to that rite, as believing or faith; consequently, if they judge themselves under indispensable obligations to preach the latter, that they may pay a just regard to that commission, and imitate the example of the apostles, that they likewise may be instrumental in saving men according to God's word; for like reasons they certainly are under equal obligations to preach baptism. And, as we have observed, was any minister to insist upon the obligation of the latter to be saved, in the total neglect of the other, it would not be admitted to be either complying with that commission, or an imitation

tion of the ministry of the apostles, in their fulfilling it.

THIRDLY, another obvious and natural inference, arising from the preceding scriptural representation of the institution of baptism, is this, that as the promise of being saved through observing it, originates from and is dependent on the will of God alone, and independent or separate from which observing even that rite, cannot save men, it follows, that no human authority can justifiably annex that promise to a rite derived wholly from men, or whenever it is have applied, it cannot that effect to those on whom it is administered.

SUPPOSE any man, or community, who profess Christianity, were to institute a rite, without the least reference to, much less as a substitution in the stead of baptism, as instituted in the New Testament, and connect it with the gospel dispensation, as is done of infant-sprinkling, and annex thereto the promise of being saved, or obtaining the remission of sins, I ask, Whether such an appointment would not meet with the disapprobation and censure of those who practise infant-sprinkling? I am persuaded it would. But, Wherein consists the difference between them? If there is any, it is in this; that the former does not oppose or suppress the practice of Christian baptism; whereas the other does entirely by those persons. But surely, this does not make the appointment and practice of the latter less excusable, but, on the contrary, more inexcusable than the other.

SUPPOSE a Jew, or any select community among them, had appointed and observed a rite as essentially differing from that of the sin-offering, as infant-sprinkling is from baptism, upon repentance and faith in Christ, and annexed to it the same promise God has made to the observing his own institution;  
can



can any impartial man really persuade himself they would have acted justifiably? or, That God's promise to the true offerer would have been fulfilled to those who observed it, when at the same time they thereby totally neglected that sacrifice he has appointed, nay more, substituted one of their own instead thereof? Should an advocate for infant-sprinkling justify such a procedure in Jews, and plead, that in such a substitution the observer of it is entitled to the promise of pardon, as in observing that sacrifice which God has instituted cannot but admit the same in a substitution of all the other positive appointments of the law likewise, which would unavoidably countenance and justify a total change in the whole ritual dispensation of Moses.

FINALLY, if the foregoing observations are founded on the truth of the gospel, I appeal to the impartial and unbiassed reader to judge, whether it is not evident, that those Pedobaptists who do not believe in original sin, and of such there are very many, cannot, with any plea of consistency with their own sentiments, plead for and practise infant - sprinkling, whereby to be saved, or obtain remission of sins, either original or practical, because they are convinced such subjects are not by imputation chargeable with the former, or guilty of the latter. And yet the ministers and members of the established church, who are of that opinion, are obliged, though in opposition to their settled opinion, to join in that service, praying to God, saying:—*Mercifully look upon this child, and wash him thoroughly with the Holy Ghost, that he being delivered from wrath to come, may be received into the ark of Christ's church.* And after to add in a solemn appeal to God, saying, *We call upon thee for this infant, that he coming to thy holy baptism may receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration.*



If the persons we are speaking of practise that service, whereby to admit the passive subject into the kingdom or church of Christ, as is expressed and affirmed in that service in the Book of Common Prayer, those concerned certainly ought seriously to consider, whether by that ceremony it enters into it, or not. For if it is not the institution of Jesus Christ, it most certainly is not initiated therein, because it is by that rite only the proper subject of it enters into it. For if by observing an human ceremony, it enters into it, then any other ritual of human invention, however different from infant-sprinkling, will equally affect that purpose; and then it will follow, that every other different ritual, which may be appointed and practised by every separate society, will admit those who are subject thereto into Christ's kingdom or church.

WHETHER these are not some of the evident absurd consequences that follow, from men's not observing the institution of Jesus Christ only, is submitted to their unbiassed and deliberate consideration.

If the foregoing observations are justly founded, will it not evidently appear, that what is called instantaneous conversion, or being saved by faith in Christ alone, infused into the soul by a divine operation, has no real countenance from examples in the New Testament. Thus the singular case of Saul's instantaneous conversion to the faith of Christ, by himself, which Ananias was thoroughly acquainted with, was not judged by him sufficient of itself, but that he ought to submit to the rite of baptism, to wash away his sins, or be saved.

AND may we not ask, Whether, in this day, there are any instances of persons instantaneously converted, who have a clearer title to be saved by their faith alone, without observing that institution, than he had? If they have not, Are they not taught by his example to "Go and do likewise?"

F I N I S.

